

Resources Update

2014 Tri-RAC

- Drought
- Wild Horse & Burro Program
- Sage Grouse



Why has it been so dry?



Drought Related Current Events

- Jan. 15, 2014- A limited water supply is predicted west of the Continental Divide according to NRCS. The NOAA Climate Prediction Center calls for a milder and somewhat drier winter for much of the west.
- Jan. 23, 2014- All counties in Nevada have been declared drought disaster counties. Other states with areas declared as drought disasters include Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Texas, Utah, Arkansas, Hawaii, Idaho, Oklahoma and California

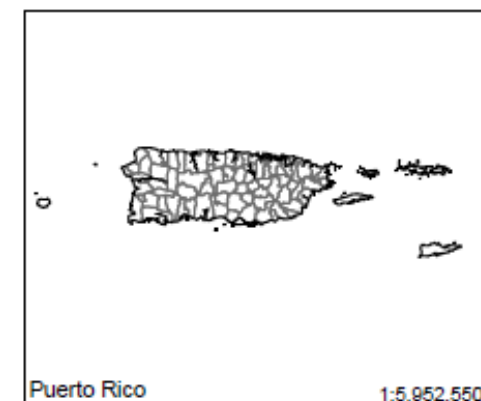
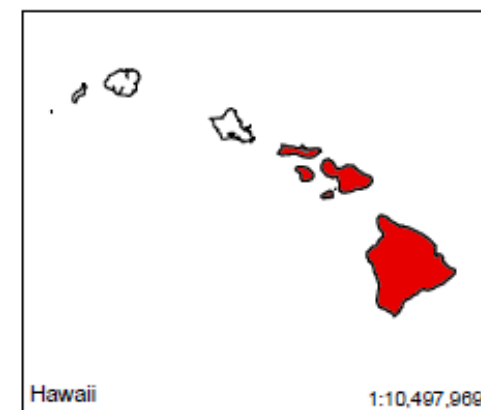
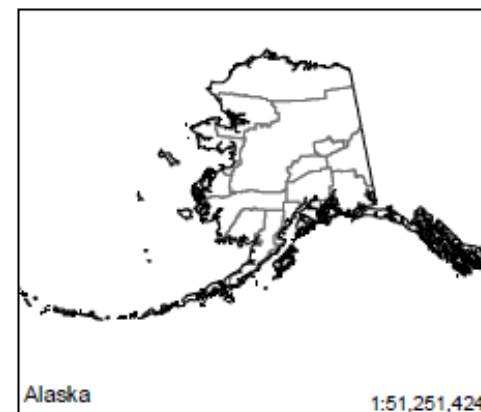
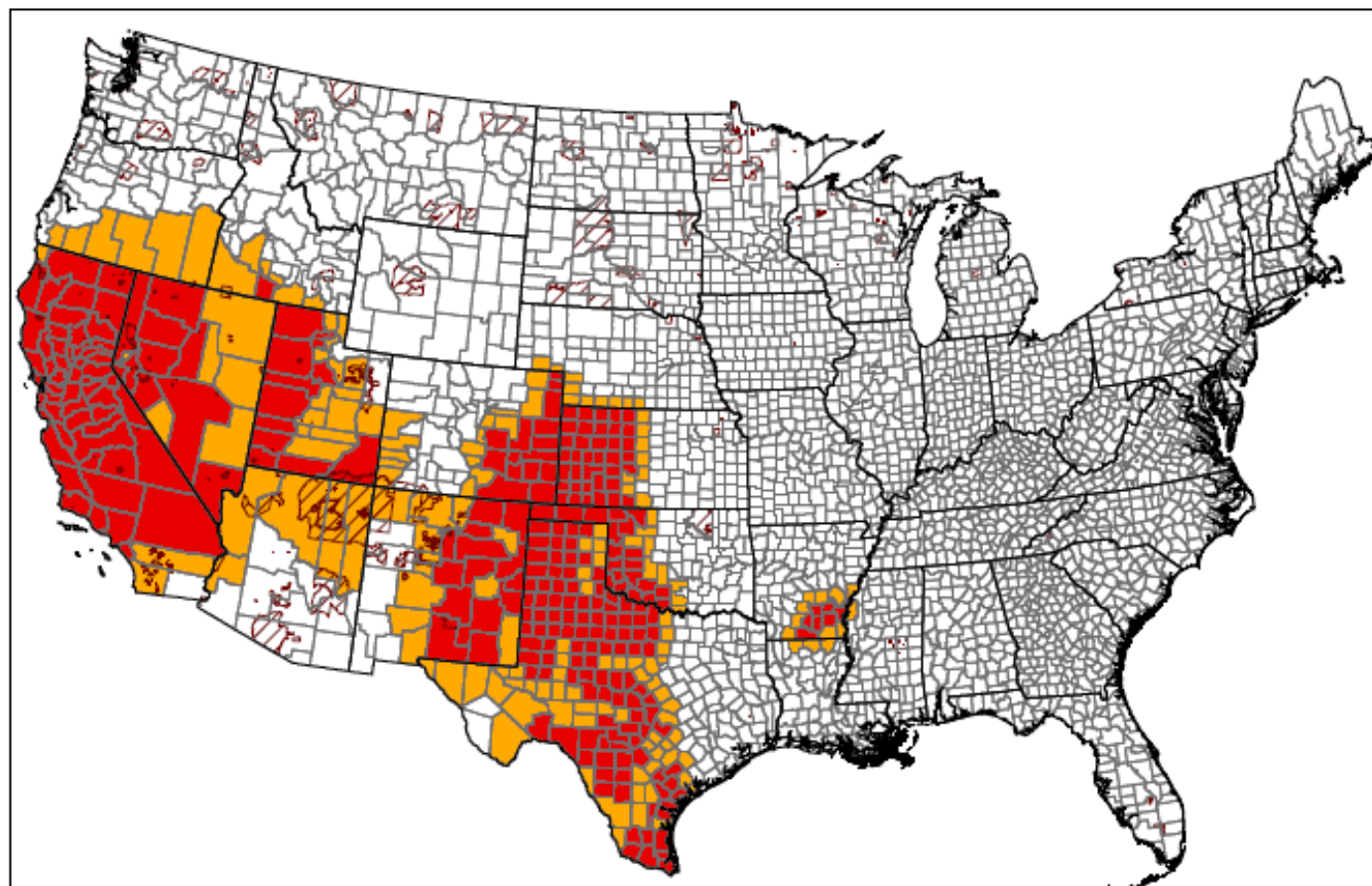
Drought Related Current Events

Feb 5, 2014- ELKO — Only one spot in northeastern Nevada registered 100 percent of average in the Feb. 1 snow survey.

Corral Canyon in the Ruby Mountains had 41 inches of snow on Saturday, matching the average water content of 9.2 inches.

Overall, basin snowpack averages measured from 33 percent of normal along the Owyhee River to 57 percent of normal in the Upper Humboldt. Merritt Mountain had only 2 inches of snow at the 7,000-foot elevation, and Midas had only 1 inch.

2014 Secretarial Drought Designations - All Drought



Secretarial Drought Designations for 2014

Disaster Incidents as of January 29, 2014

- State Boundary
- County Boundary
- Tribal Lands

January 29, 2014

- Primary Counties: 284
- Contiguous Counties: 168

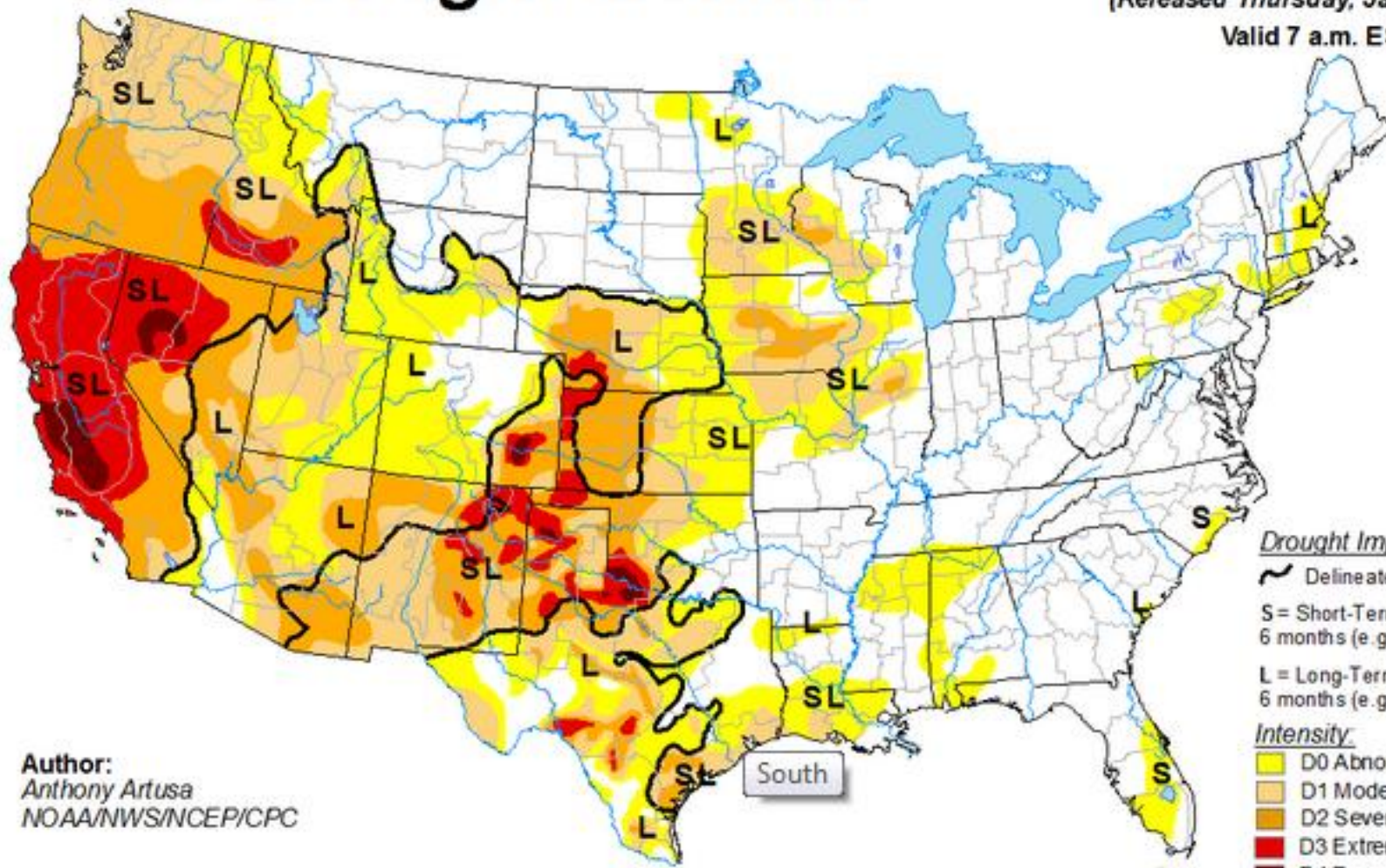
1:23,721,368



USDA Farm Service Agency
Production, Emergencies and Compliance Division
Washington, D.C.
January 29, 2014

U.S. Drought Monitor

January 28, 2014
(Released Thursday, Jan. 30, 2014)
Valid 7 a.m. EST








Author:
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NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC

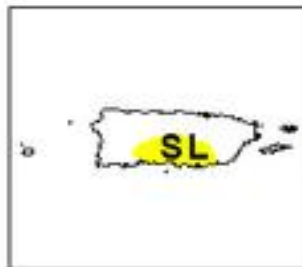
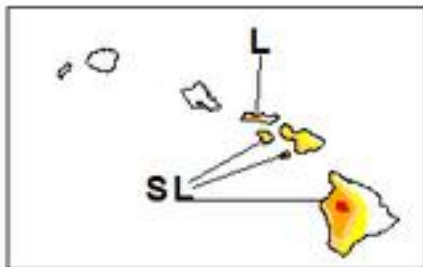
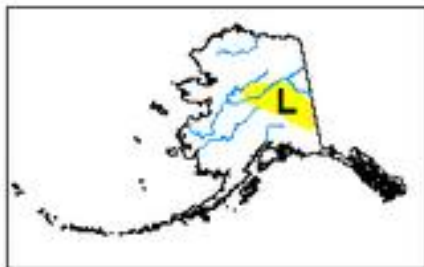
Drought Impact Types:

~ Delineates dominant impacts
S = Short-Term, typically less than 6 months (e.g. agriculture, grasslands)
L = Long-Term, typically greater than 6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

Intensity:

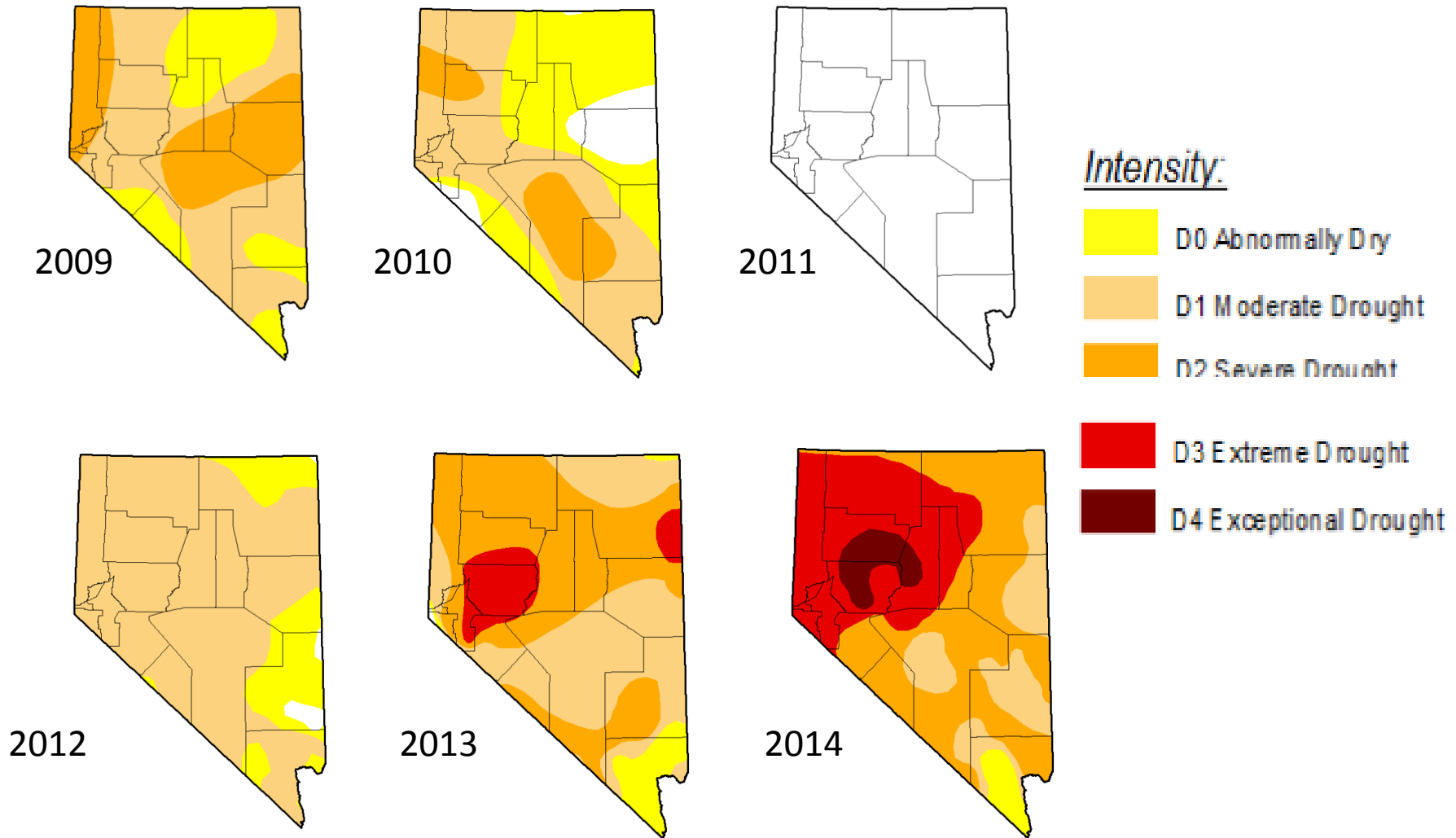
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.



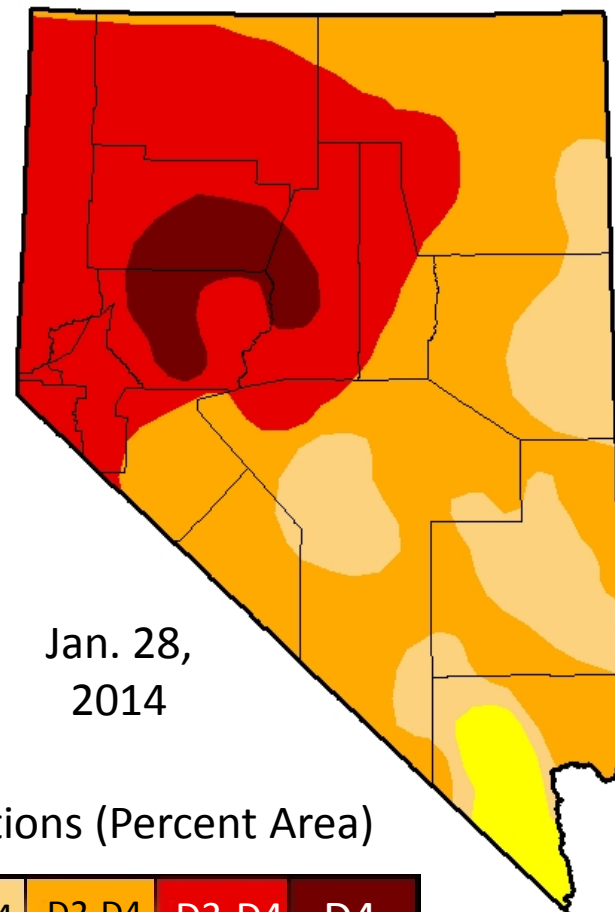
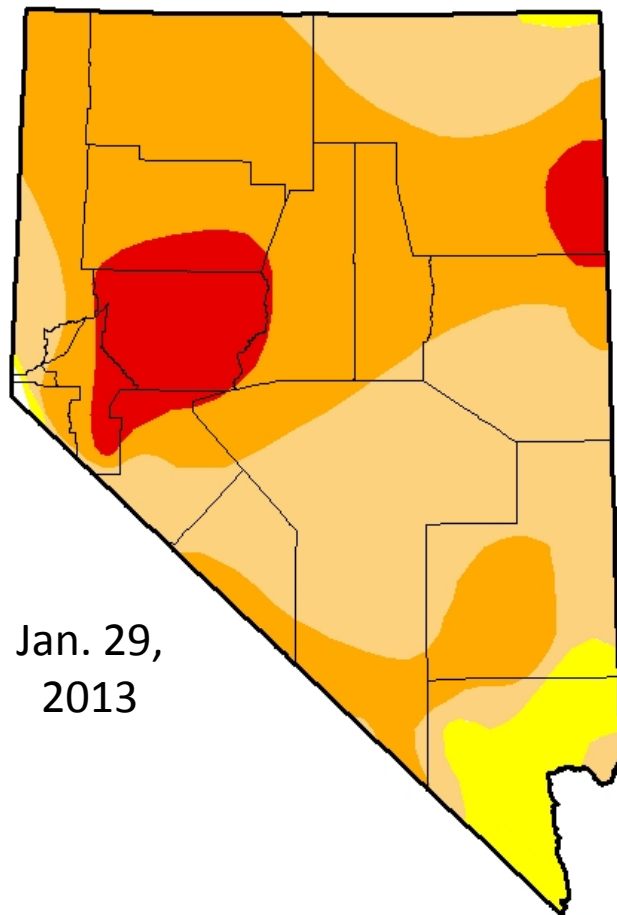
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

Nevada Drought Monitor 2009-2014





All drought maps are from late January

Nevada Drought Monitor 2013-2014




Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

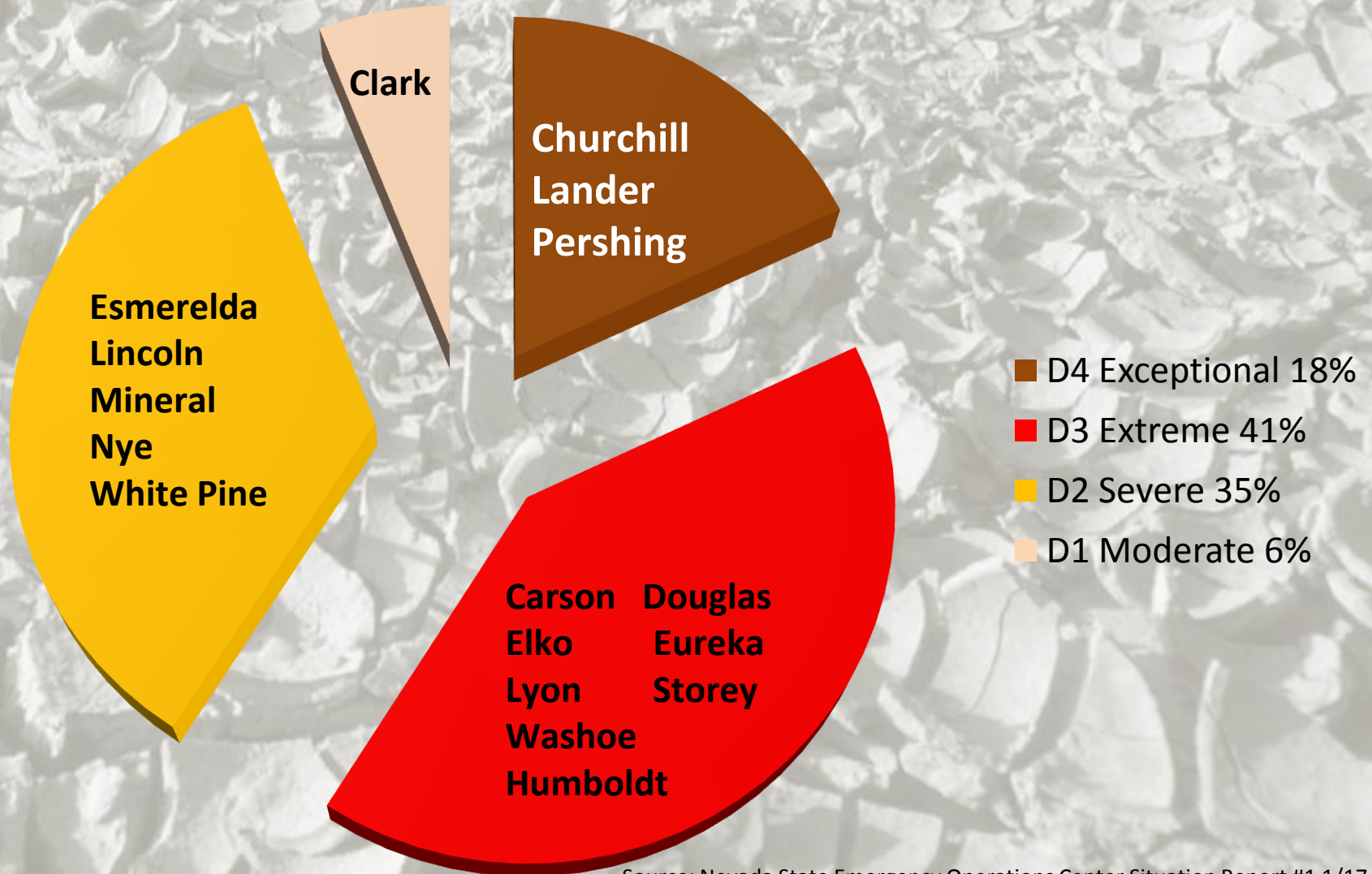
	D0	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Jan 28, 2014	0.0	100	96.80	80.30	38.17	5.37
Jan. 29, 2013	0.11	98.99	93.71	56.06	9.28	0.0

 D0 - Abnormally Dry
 D1 Drought - Moderate

 D2 Drought - Severe
 D3 Drought - Extreme

 D4 Drought - Exceptional

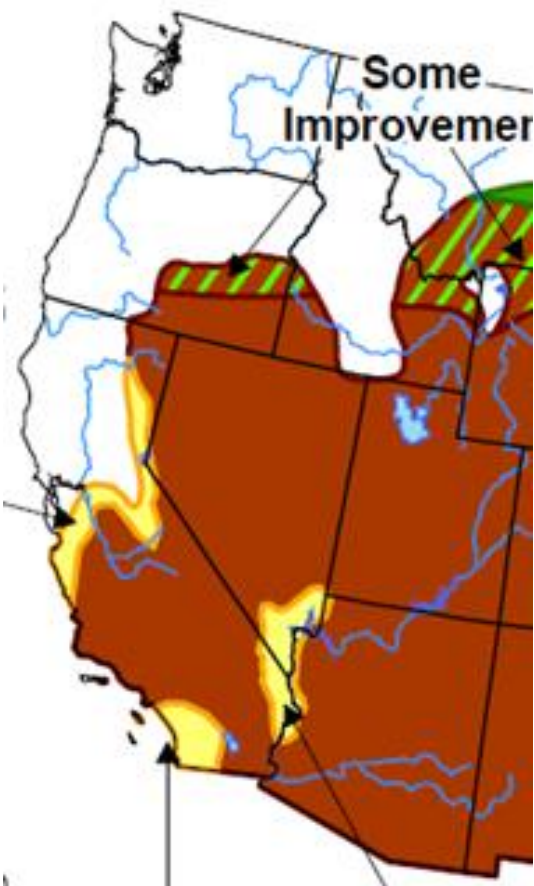
Drought Data by Percent and County



Source: Nevada State Emergency Operations Center Situation Report #1 1/17/14

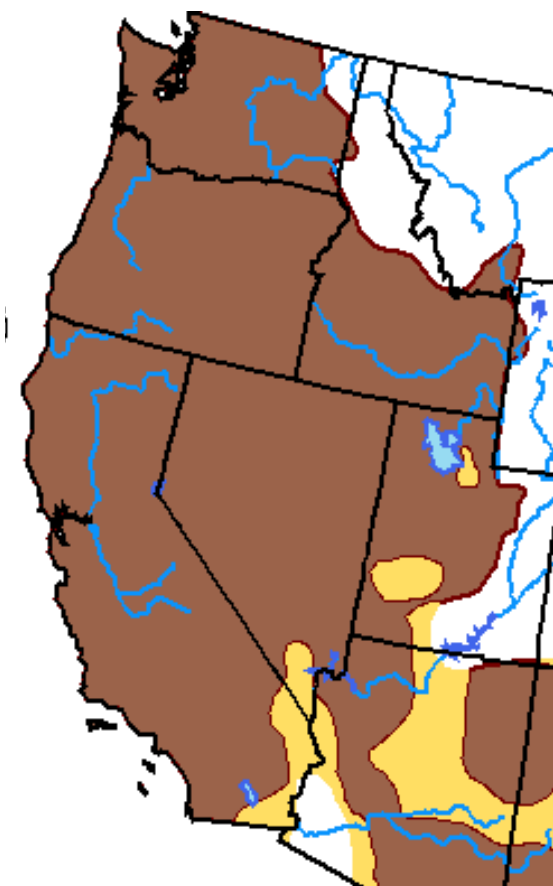
U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook Comparison

January 2013



-  Drought to persist or intensify
-  Drought ongoing, some improvement
-  Drought likely to improve, impacts ease
-  Drought development likely

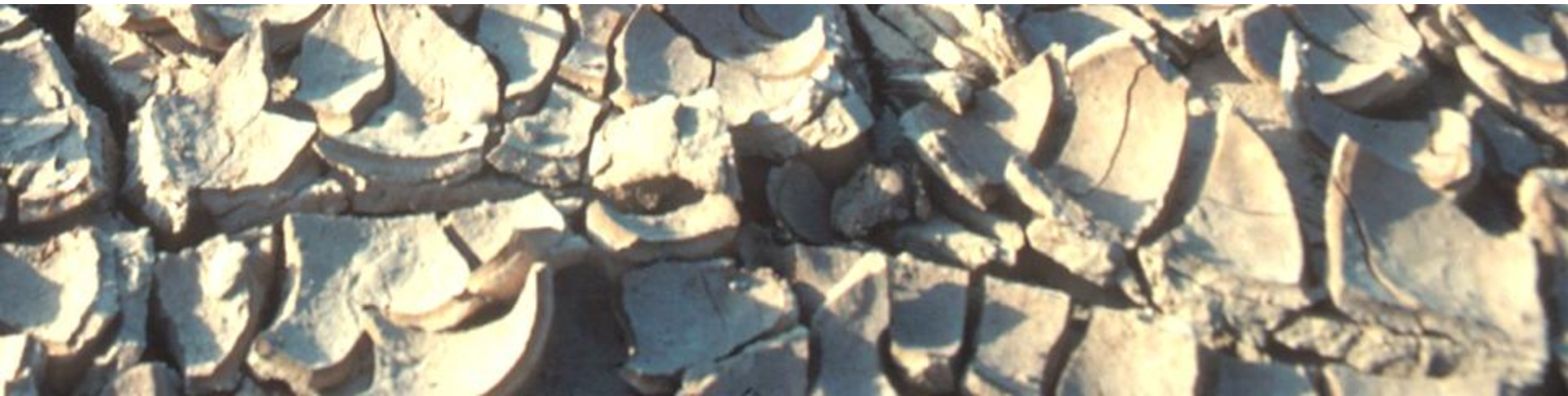
January 2014



Source: National Weather Service Seasonal Drought Outlook

Drought Management

- **Completed Drought Management EAs for Battle Mountain, Carson City, Elko, Ely and Winnemucca Districts**
- **Issued nine drought related decisions that resulted in removal of cattle from allotments (7 Battle Mountain, 2 Winnemucca)**



Drought Monitoring and Actions

	Grazing Allotments Monitored	Acres of Allotments Monitored	Grazing Allotments with Voluntary Reductions	Acres of Voluntary Reductions	HMAs Monitored	Acres of HMAs Monitored	Riparian Areas Monitored
2012	240	23.5 million	41	2.2 million	53	5.6 million	391
2013	266	18 million	245	17.6 million	53	5.6 million	391

What is the BLM doing about drought?

- Continued voluntary non-use requests to permittees
- Continued monitoring of rangelands
- Issuing range decisions as necessary
- WH&B monitoring flights to assess animal and range health
- Outreach and education on drought and weather using social media

Questions



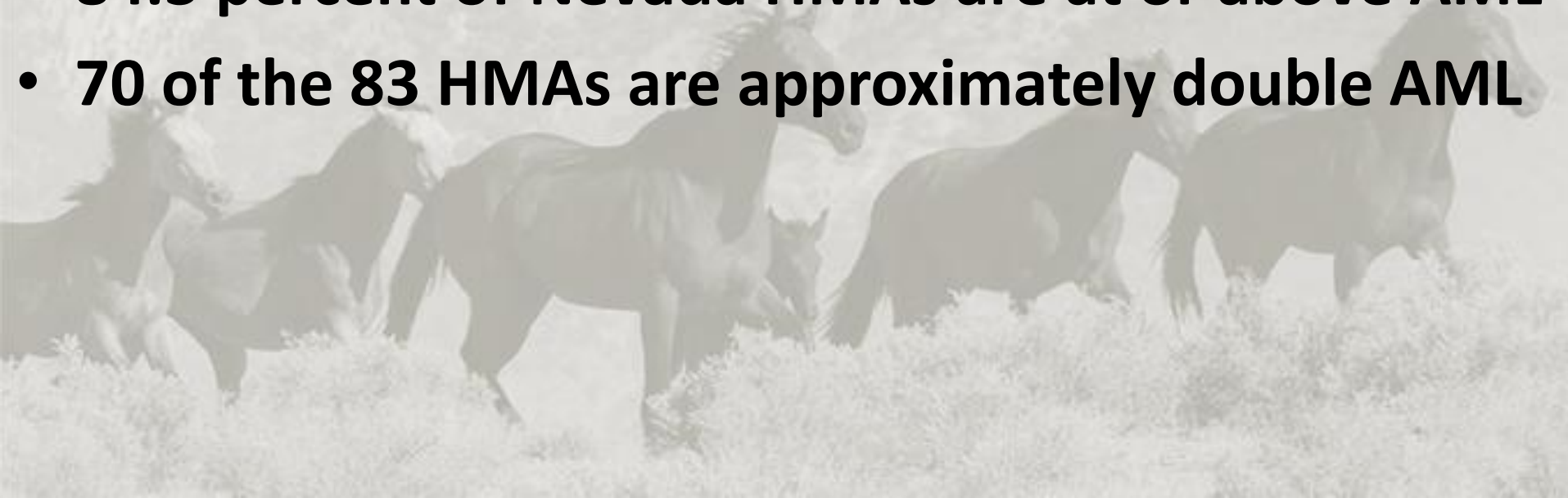
Wild Horse and Burro Program

2014 Tri-RAC



Population Estimate

- **National: 37,300**
- **Nevada: 22,400-25,000**
- **National AML is 26,600**
- **Nevada AML: 12,688**
- **84.3 percent of Nevada HMAs are at or above AML**
- **70 of the 83 HMAs are approximately double AML**

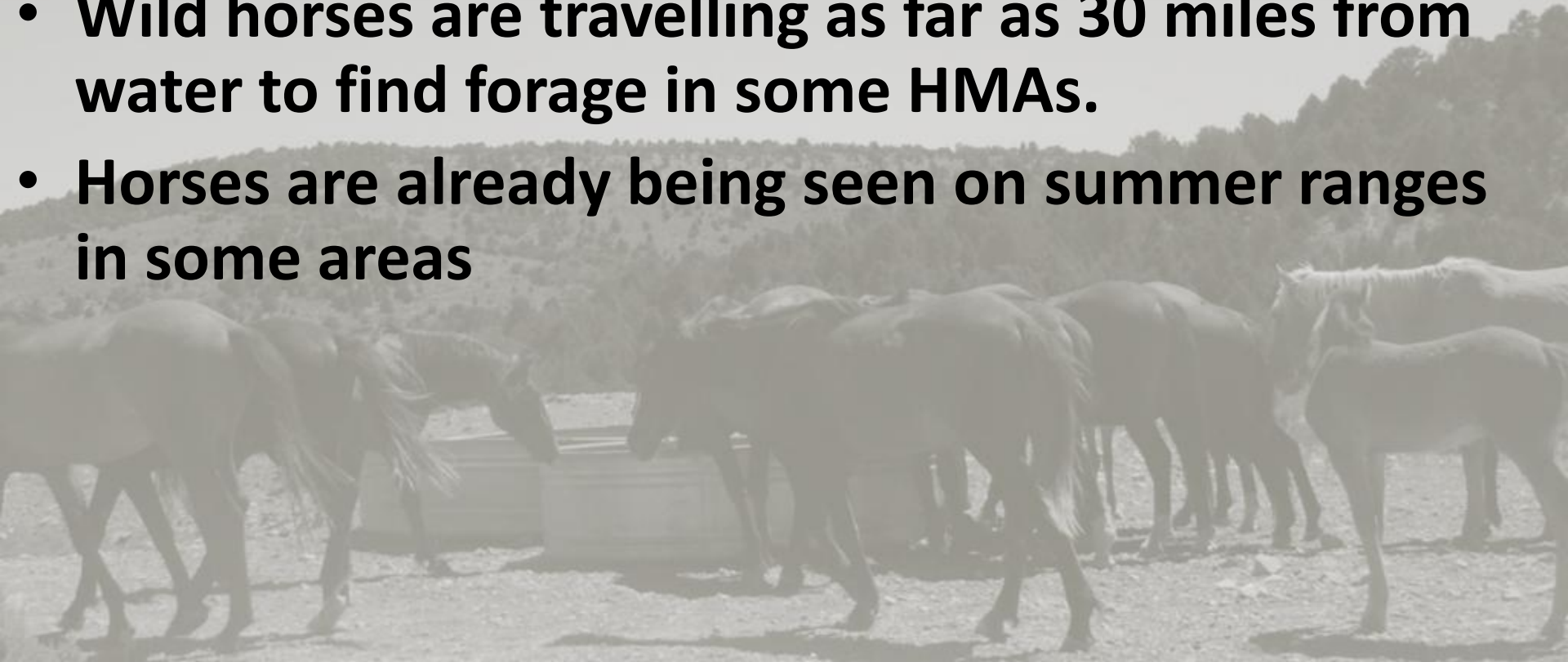


FY 2013 Data

	National	Nevada
Removed	4,221	2,787
Treated	509	46
Adopted	2,336	89
Sales	64	0

Impacts of Drought on Wild Horses and Burros

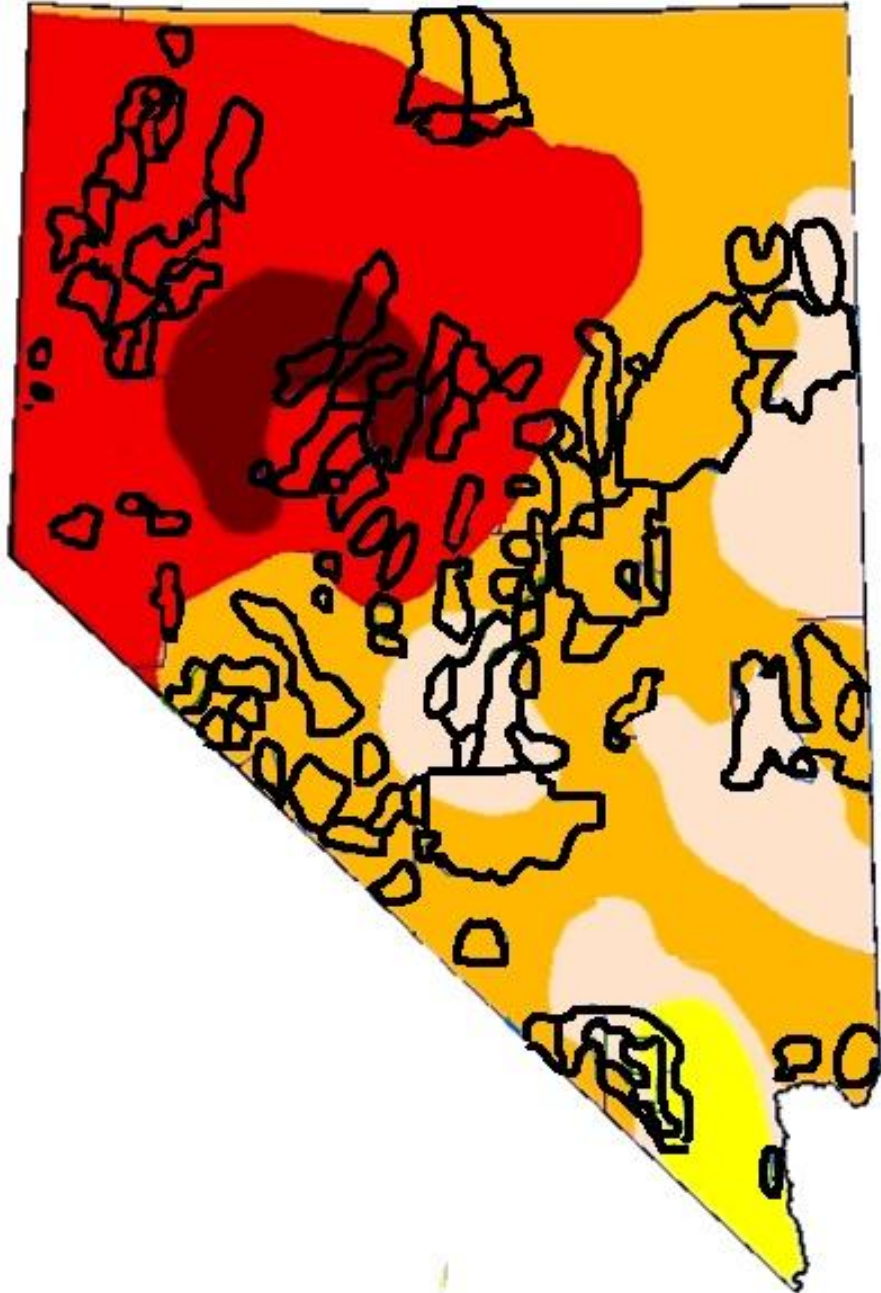
- **Wild horses and burros are moving outside of HMAs for forage and water due to drought conditions.**
- **Wild horses are travelling as far as 30 miles from water to find forage in some HMAs.**
- **Horses are already being seen on summer ranges in some areas**



National Academy of Sciences Report

- **Report was released in June 2013**
- **Study looked at the science within BLM's population estimation, population processes (density, predators), fertility control, population models, and genetic diversity.**
- **Findings included continuing to build on partnership with USGS, working with local stakeholders when developing management plans and providing greater specificity in guidance to field managers.**

Drought Conditions and HMAs



**D0- Abnormally
Dry** ●

**D1- Moderate
Drought** ●

**D2- Severe
Drought** ●

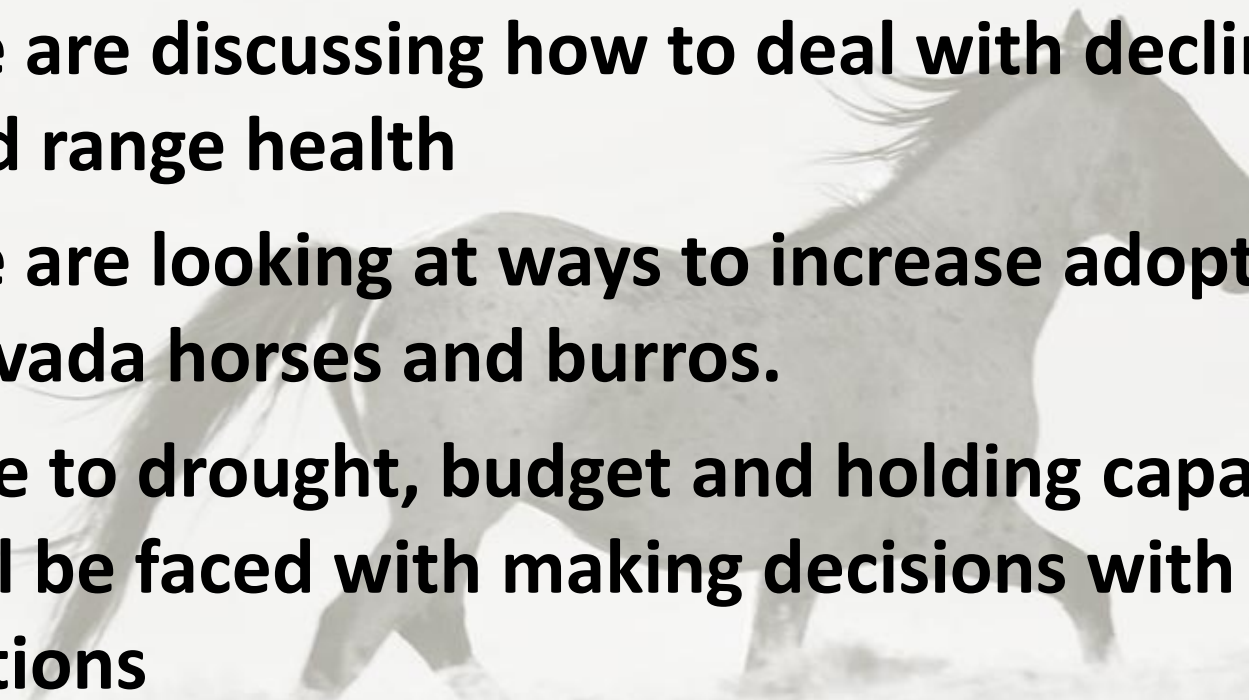
**D3- Extreme
Drought** ●

**D4- Exceptional
Drought** ●

What is BLM doing about WH&B Nationally?

- **Develop new techniques for slowing the growth of herds, some of them in NV.**
 - **Continuing partnership with USGS to improve counting of horses.**
 - **Determining how many horses are ecologically sustainable on Western rangelands.**
 - **Reforming the adoption program and exploring options for lower cost off-range holding**
 - **Exploring new avenues like partnering with USAID**
 - **Comprehensive animal welfare policy will be released this year**
- 

What is BLM doing about WH&B in Nevada?

- **We are figuring out how to deal with limited to no gather opportunities**
 - **We are developing policies to address water hauling**
 - **We are discussing how to deal with declining animal and range health**
 - **We are looking at ways to increase adoption of Nevada horses and burros.**
 - **Due to drought, budget and holding capacity, BLM NV will be faced with making decisions with few good options**
- 

Eco-Sanctuaries

- **NEPA is beginning on three eco-sanctuaries in Montana, Wyoming and New Mexico**
- **They are located on private land and have a capacity of approximately 900 horses total**
- **Save America's Mustangs Eco-Sanctuary- confirming whether or not the project will move forward**



Questions

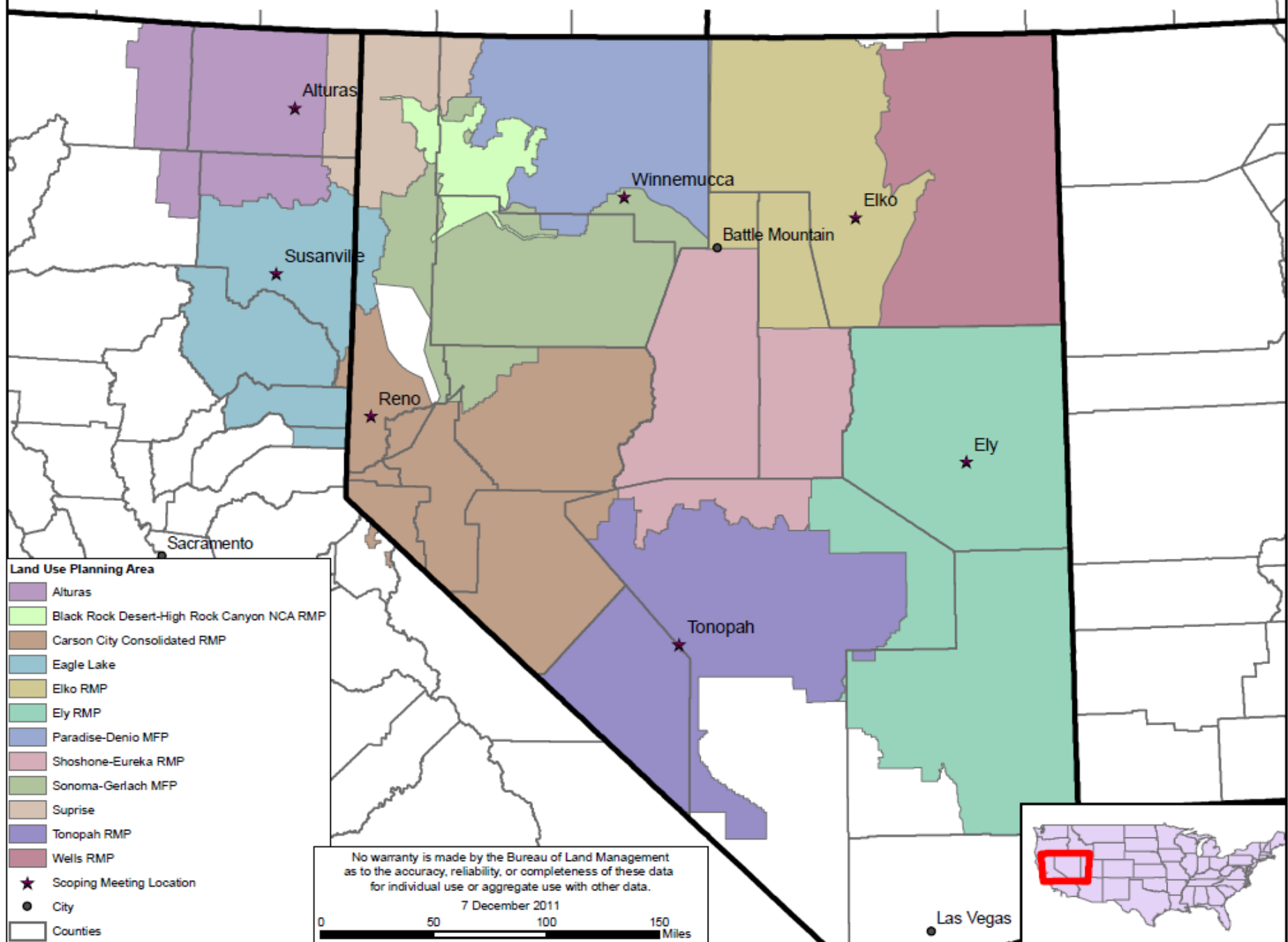


Sage Grouse

2014 Tri-RAC



Greater Sage-grouse Planning Strategy: NE California - Nevada Sub-Region



Time Frames

Sub Regional Planning Effort	Comment Period	Proposed RMP	Record of Decision
Nevada-Northeastern California	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment period closed Jan. 29	Summer 2014	Fall 2014
Idaho and Southwestern Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment period closed Jan. 29	Summer 2014	Fall 2014
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment period closed Jan. 29	Summer 2014	Fall 2014
Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comment period closes Feb. 20	Summer 2014	Fall 2014

Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas expect sign RODs in mid to late 2014

Greater Sage-grouse Comments

- **Over 15,000 comments were received on the NV-CA GRSB Draft EIS.**
- **Approximately 97 percent of the comments were form letters from various groups.**
- **Comments are being analyzed and a response will be prepared by April.**
- **Comments from the RACs will be reviewed and there may be follow up questions.**

Governor's Alternative

- **Is one of six alternatives in the Draft EIS.**
- **The state updated portions of the State Plan**
- **We are analyzing the changes to determine how they will be incorporated into the Final EIS.**
- **There are bi-monthly meetings scheduled with the state, FWS and SETT to discuss components of the proposed plan and opportunities for a common approach.**

Next Steps

- **Public Comment Analysis: February 2014**
- **Response to Public Comments: April 2014**
- **Cooperating Agency Review: May 2014**
- **Final EIS Issued: July 2014**
- **Protest Period/ Governor's Consistency Review: July-August 2014**
- **Issue Record of Decision: September 2014**

How Can the RAC Stay Engaged?

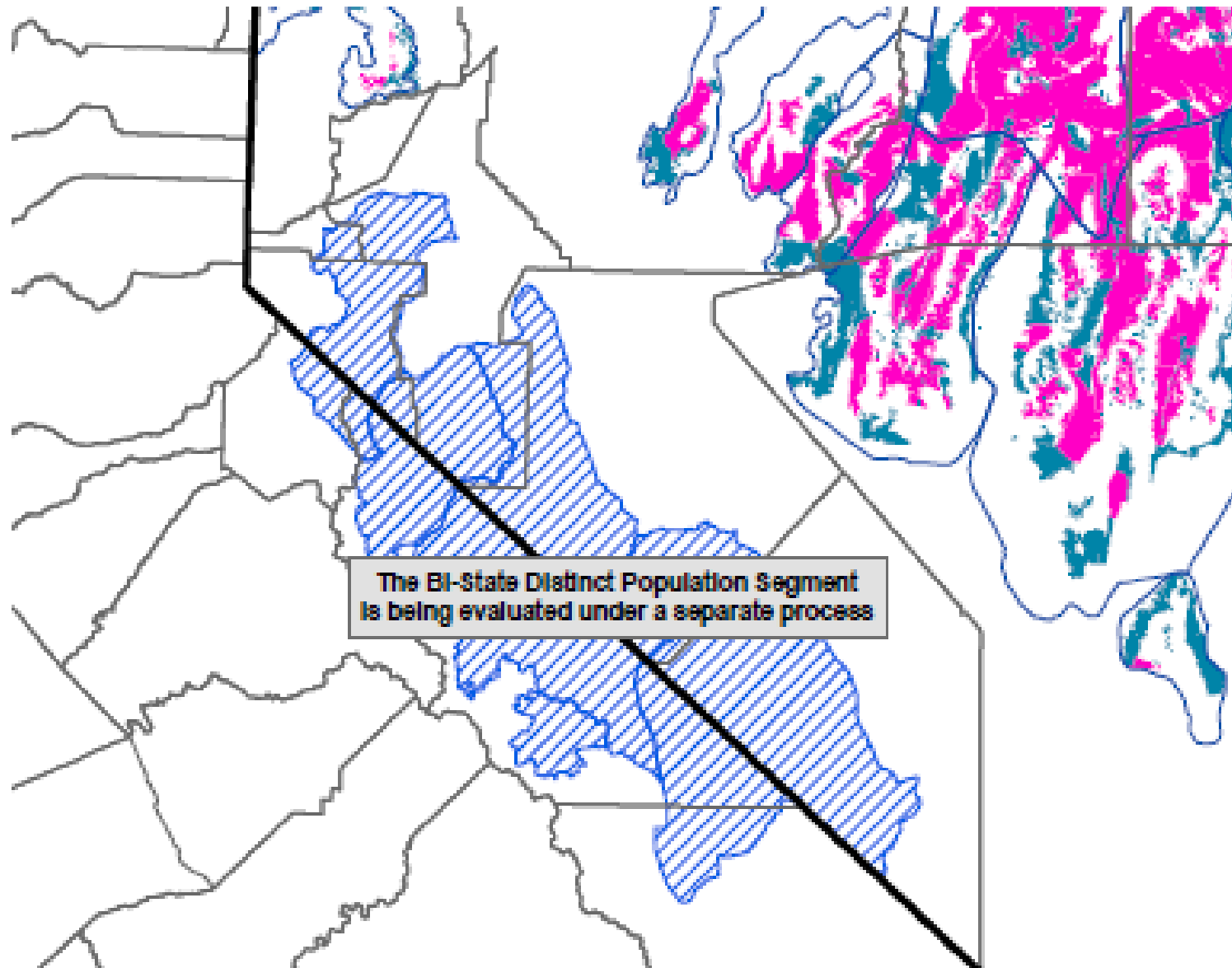
- Updates on the progress of the FEIS preparation will be sent out monthly.
- We anticipate engagement as it relates to implementation of the plan.



What Did We Do With County Plans?

- There will be a consistency check with the various county plans and documentation of that process in the final EIS.
- Elements of the Elko County Plan were incorporated into the Agency alternative and the State Alternative.
- Raven control was addressed in the Required Design Features in the DEIS through anti-perching structures and the Desired Habitat Objective for increased brush cover.

Bi-State Map



Bi-State Sage Grouse Intro

- **The Bi-State Sage-grouse are genetically distinct from Greater Sage-grouse and are considered a Distinct Population Segment by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for potential Endangered Species Act listing.**
- **Their population occurs only in eastern California and west central Nevada.**
- **The comment period for the Draft Bi-state Sage Grouse EIS closed Jan. 17.**

Bi-State FWS

- **The US Fish and Wildlife Service extended the comment period on their proposals to list the species and designate critical habitat to Feb. 10.**



Planning Documents Impacted by Bi-State Sage Grouse

Planning Documents	Action
Humboldt-Toiyabe Forest Plan (USFS)	Amendment
Inyo Forest Plan (USFS)	Amendment
Bishop RMP (BLM)	Plan is current
Carson City RMP (BLM)	Amendment and incorporate into current RMP revisions
Tonopah RMP (BLM)	Amendment and incorporate into current RMP revisions

Bi-state EIS Comments

- **Approximately 170 comments were received during the comment period.**
- **General Themes of comments included:**
 - Range Management
 - OHV restrictions
 - Locatable and leasable mineral activities
 - Livestock grazing
 - Economic effects

Bi-state EIS Next Steps

- **Analyze comments and develop a comprehensive response document**
- **Late spring early summer final plans for BLM and USFS will be completed.**
- **September 2014: Publish US Forest Service and BLM final RODs**
- **Additional information contact:**
 - **James Winfrey, US Forest Service**
jwinfrey@fs.fed.us, 775-355-5308

Bi-state Local Area Working Group

- **BLM will continue to work with the LAWG on:**
 - **Implementing the 2012 Bi-State Action Plan**
 - **Prioritizing items in the Action Plan**
 - **Identifying budget needs for items in plan**

EOC/ Agency

- **Securing budgets**
 - To include partners like UNR, state and other federal agencies
- **Leveraging available funding from partners**
- **Ensure landscape level approach is continued across ownership boundaries.**

Questions

